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CANADA

MILITARY ASYLUM,

INCORPORATED 1853.

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Learn to do well ; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed,  
judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

ISAIAH I. 17.

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THE HISTORY OF THE

REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENTS TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY JAMES OSGOOD

IN TWO VOLUMES

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Canada Military Asylum.

THE Committee of the Canada Military Asylum being of opinion that the publication of a pamphlet, embracing an account of its origin, history and objects, would be advantageous to its interests, and acceptable to all the supporters and friends of the Institution, beg to offer to the military in this command, and to the public in general, the following:—

During the war with the United States (1812 to 1815) nearly the whole of the Military force in Canada was employed in the upper province, or on the frontier of the lower. Quebec was principally garrisoned by Militia. The effective troops were generally sent forward as soon as they arrived from England, and the women and children belonging to them were retained at Quebec, where the Military authorities hired buildings which were fitted up as women's barracks; bedding and rations of provision being regularly allowed them. Soon after the peace of 1815, this unusual provision was all at once discontinued: in the interval many of these women had lost their husbands; some children had lost both their parents, and extensive distress was the consequence, to meet which the ordinary parochial charities were insufficient.

The Rev. Dr. Mills, then Chaplain to the Forces at Quebec, at this time adopted the system of making a collection of alms at the attendance of the military for divine service in the Cathedral; and from the funds so raised, assisted by contributions from charitable individuals, a large house at St. Roch's suburb was hired by the year: the Military government sanctioned from time to time a transfer of condemned barrack bedding, some stoves, &c., in aid of the charity; and at the

request of the Chaplain to the Forces, some officers of the garrison met him periodically, to assist in the administration of relief, and in making the necessary arrangements; and thus was formed the Committee of Management.

About the year 1830, the Committee entered into a contract for the washing and repairing of barrack and hospital bedding, by which regular employment was secured for widows on the list of the Asylum, and a source of permanent income for the Asylum was obtained. More extensive premises being consequently required, the Committee, in 1833, succeeded in purchasing the house, now occupied as the Asylum, in Coteau Street, St. John's Suburb; but as the Committee was not vested with corporate power to enable them to sell, mortgage or otherwise convey the property, a legal transfer of it was effected by the Lord Bishop of Montreal, as Rector of Quebec, whereby its permanence was secured.

In the session of Provincial Parliament, 1852-53, an act of incorporation was obtained, and the Committee were consequently invested with full legal power over the property under their care, and having been empowered by the same act to frame a code of bye-laws for their own guidance, they adopted the following, at a full meeting, held on the 8th of December, 1853:—

- 1.—The Institution shall be called the "Canada Military Asylum," and is intended for the relief of Soldiers' Widows and Orphans throughout the Province of Canada, and, under certain circumstances, infirm discharged soldiers.
- 2.—Relief shall be afforded in two forms, viz: "indoor" and "outdoor;" the former is restricted to widows and orphans, the latter is open to these, and in cases of extreme necessity, to infirm discharged soldiers, and their children.

- 3.—No widow shall be admitted to the benefits of this charity, unless she has been married during her husband's period of service.
- 4.—No orphans shall be entitled to the benefits of this charity unless they have been born in wedlock, their father having married during his period of service.
- 5.—The corporation shall consist of the persons named in the act to incorporate the Canada Military Asylum, and of all persons subscribing to the amount of five shillings currency per annum.
- 6.—There shall be an annual meeting of the Corporation in the month of July, to receive the report of the retiring Committee, with the statement of the Treasurer, made up to the 30th June, and to elect a Secretary, Treasurer and Committee of Management.
- 7.—The said Committee of Management, of which one half at least shall be Military, shall consist of the Rector of Quebec, the Commandant of the Garrison, the Minister of St. Andrew's Church, Quebec, the principal Medical Officer at Quebec, the Chaplain to the Garrison at Quebec, the Town Major at Quebec, with the Secretary, Treasurer, and, at most, ten other persons to be elected at the annual meeting of the Corporation. The Commandant of the Garrison shall be, "ex officio," President of the Committee.
- 8.—The Committee shall have power to fill up all vacancies among its members within the year.
- 9.—The Committee is authorised to elect Honorary Members from among such persons out of Quebec, as may be active in promoting the objects of the Institution.

- 10.—The Committee shall meet weekly, at an hour and day to be fixed by themselves.
- 11.—The Committee retiring at the annual meeting shall cause a Report to be prepared by their Secretary, to be submitted to the members at the said meeting. The Report to be circulated among the subscribers.
- 12.—The present Committee to remain in office until the next annual meeting in July.

The objects of the Asylum are two-fold: 1st, the entire maintenance of a limited number of very decrepid widows as inmates of the Asylum, as well as of children who have lost both parents. 2nd. The partial support of widows by out-relief, varying in amount according to their respective incapacity and destitution; and in some case relief is afforded to extreme cases of distress among old pensioners. The income of the Asylum is also of a two-fold character,—permanent and casual.—Under the former head is embraced interest on investment, grant from Provincial Government, and the profits on washing barrack and hospital bedding; under the latter head is classed collections after divine services and voluntary contributions of all kinds.

The Committee are desirous of appropriating the permanent portion of their income to the maintenance of the Asylum and its inmates, and the more extreme cases of distress without its walls, and to devote its casual income to the other lighter and more transitory cases of distress; it is obvious, therefore, that its sphere of charity will be regulated by the support it receives in the shape of annual subscriptions and donations. The Asylum itself is an old and dilapidated building, involving a large annual outlay in repairs, and the necessity of rebuilding it ere long is manifest. It would be most desirable to have it in a more public situation, by which it would attract greater notice, and in all probability be better supported.

An application, in accordance with such a view, was made to the Colonial Government for a grant of land at or about Wolfe's Monument, on the Plains of Abraham ; but a projected transfer of the land thereabout to the Imperial Government, interfered with the scheme.

The Committee, however, still keep in view the prosecution of these designs, for which they solicit the cordial co-operation of the Military of all classes in the Command, viz : the re-construction of their Asylum, if possible, on a more favorable spot, and the rendering more permanent and extensive their sphere of charitable operations ; in furtherance of this latter object they have addressed to Assistant Chaplains to the Forces in this Command the following circular, in response to which they trust they may be favored with an increase of means commensurate with their extended field of relief :

SIR,

The Committee of this Asylum being desirous of extending, in a more systematic manner, the good effects of the Institution, and feeling that at present there is some deficiency of organized local co-operation, I am desirous to inform you it is their wish that Honorary Members, residing in other localities than Quebec, should form themselves into local or Sub-Committees, in order that cases of distress occurring in their neighbourhood may at once be thoroughly enquired into, and the result arrived at, be forwarded to the Acting Committee at Quebec, who will be entirely guided thereby as to the merits of each case, and will only reserve to themselves the deciding of the amount of relief to be apportioned to each case of distress.

The Committee are further desirous that the Assistant Chaplain to the Forces, at each station, should consent to become Local Agent and Secretary, and that all correspondence and remittances should pass through his hands.

The Committee are persuaded that the revenue of the Asylum would be materially increased, were its claims more systematically and effectually laid before all the Military at the various posts in the Command; and in furtherance of this object, I enclose you copies of a Prospectus of the Asylum, which you are requested to distribute, and to advocate the cause of the Asylum among the Garrison at

I am also to request that you will be good enough to assume the office of Local Agent and Secretary, to organise the action of the Honorary Members in your neighbourhood, and that you will be pleased to communicate to me such local matters and applications as may from time to time occur.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. O'CONNELL, CAPT. R. A.
Secretary.

Lastly, they submit to the public at large a statement of their means and the numbers of persons receiving support from the Asylum; and they would express a hope that, under God's blessing, their cause may recommend itself to the support of the public at large. They have noticed with satisfaction how the claim for patriotic gratitude, made from afar, on behalf of the widows and orphans of British soldiers who fell in the Crimea and India has been responded to by the inhabitants of Canada; and may they not expect an equal sympathy for the suffering relicts of those who were a portion of their own community, and who have left their widows and orphans as it were destitute at their feet?

NUMBER OF PERSONS RECEIVING RELIEF FROM THE ASYLUM.

Widows, Inmates	6
" Outpensioners	25
Orphans, Inmates	8
Children of Widows	17
Infirm Pensioners	5

SOURCES OF INCOME.

FUNDED PROPERTY.

	£	s.	d.
Bank Stock	450	0	0
Government Debentures	200	0	0

£650 0 0

Provincial Grant £50.

Profits on Washing performed by Widows, varying.

Subscriptions and Donations, varying.

Charitable Expenditure, average, £300.